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Greet the morning sun with the melodies of the Trupial

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Photo Credit: Daniel Ruben Gonzalez

Trump comes to Bondi's defense amid uproar from his base over Jeffrey Epstein files flop

By ERIC TUCKER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump leapt to the defense of Attorney General Pam Bondi on Tuesday in the face of mounting criticism from far-right influencers and conservative internet personalities over the Justice Department's abrupt refusal to release additional documents from the Jeffrey Epstein sex-trafficking investigation.

When a reporter attempted to ask Bondi about Epstein at a White House Cabinet meeting, Trump headed off the questions and scolded the journalist: "Are you still talking about Jeffrey Epstein? This guy's been talked about for years." "At a time like this," he added, "where we're having some of the greatest success and also tragedy with what happened in Texas, it just seems like a desecration." The comments appeared to signal continued job security for Bondi and amounted to a striking rebuke of members of Trump's base who have called for her resignation and mocked her for what they believe to be her failed commitment to release incriminating files from the Epstein investigation. A supposed Epstein "client list" that Bondi once intimated was sitting on her desk for review does not exist, the Justice Department acknowledged in a two-page memo Monday that further riled conservative critics who'd been hoping for proof of a government cover-up.

Attorney General Pam Bondi, front, with Agriculture Secretary Brooke Rollins, back left to right, Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth and Arkansas Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders, speaks during a news conference at the Department of Agriculture to rollout the USDA'S National Farm Security Action Plan and discuss actions being taken to protect American agriculture from foreign threats in Washington, Tuesday, July 8, 2025.

Associated Press

The pressure is on Bondi

Bondi has faced pressure after a first document dump she hyped failed to deliver revelations. Far-right influencers were invited to the White House in February and provided with binders marked "The Epstein Files: Phase 1" and "Declassified" that contained documents that had largely already been in the public domain.

After the first release fell flat, Bondi said officials were poring over a "truckload" of previously withheld evidence she said had been handed over by the FBI and raised expectations of forthcoming releases.

But after a months-long review of evidence in the government's possession, the Justice Department said in Monday's memo that no "further disclosure would be appropriate or warranted." The department noted that much of the material was placed under seal by a court to protect victims and "only a fraction" of it "would have been aired publicly had Epstein gone to trial."

The only evidence disclosed as part of the memo was a video meant to definitively prove that the wealthy financier had taken his own life in jail in 2019, but even that disclosure did little to quiet conspiracy theorists who believe he was killed.

It's not a happy development for online detectives

The department's client list revelation was especially dismaying for conservative influencers and online sleuths given that Bondi in a Fox News interview in February had intimated that such a document was "sitting on my desk" for review. Bondi insisted Tuesday that she had been referring to the Epstein case file as being on her desk, as opposed to a specific client list.

"That's what I meant by that," she said.

She also defended her earlier public statements suggesting that the FBI was reviewing "tens of thousands" of videos of Epstein with "children or child porn." The Associated Press published a story last week about the unanswered questions surrounding those videos and the Justice Department's refusal to provide clarity.

The memo Monday did not suggest that the videos in the government's possession depicted Epstein with children, instead referring to images of Epstein as well as more than 10,000 "downloaded videos and images of illegal child sex abuse material and other pornography."

"They turned out to be child porn downloaded by that disgusting Jeffrey Epstein," she said.

But she did not explain why the department could not release other files from the "truckload" of evidence she said was delivered to the agency months ago.❑

Impostor uses AI to impersonate Rubio and contact foreign and U.S. officials

By MATTHEW LEE
AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The State Department is warning U.S. diplomats of attempts to impersonate Secretary of State Marco Rubio and possibly other officials using technology driven by artificial intelligence, according to two senior officials and a cable sent last week to all embassies and consulates.

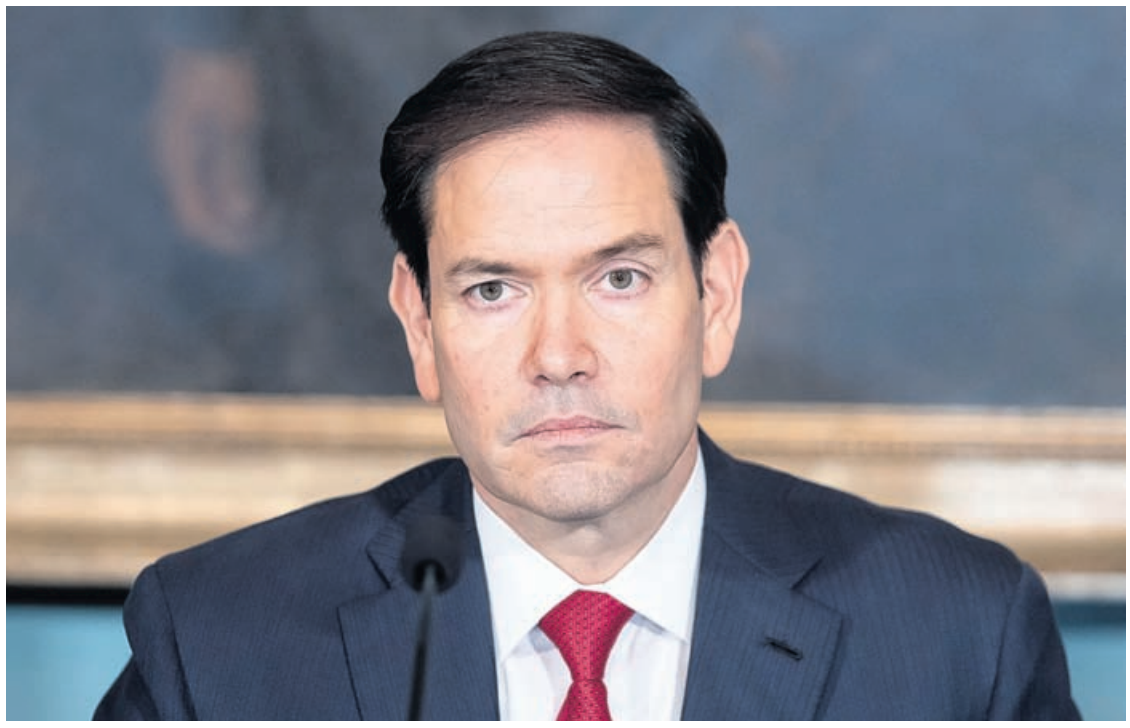
The warning came after the department discovered that an impostor posing as Rubio had attempted to reach out to at least three foreign ministers, a U.S. senator and a governor, according to the July 3 cable, which was first reported by The Washington Post. The recipients of the scam messages, which were sent by text, Signal and voice mail, were not identified in the cable, a copy of which was shared with The Associated Press.

"The State Department is aware of this incident and is currently monitoring and addressing the matter," department spokeswoman Tammy Bruce told reporters. "The department takes seriously its responsibility to safeguard its information and continuously take steps to improve the department's cybersecurity posture to prevent future incidents."

She declined to comment further due to "security reasons" and the ongoing investigation.

It's the latest instance of a high-level Trump administration figure targeted by an impersonator, with a similar incident revealed in May involving President Donald Trump's chief of staff, Susie Wiles. The misuse of AI to deceive people is likely to grow as the technology improves and becomes more widely available, and the FBI warned this past spring about "malicious actors" impersonating senior U.S. government officials in a text and voice messaging campaign.

The hoaxes involving Rubio had been unsuccessful and "not very sophisticated," one of the officials said. Nonetheless, the second official said the department deemed it "prudent" to advise all employees and foreign governments, particularly as efforts by foreign actors to compromise information security increase.



Secretary of State Marco Rubio attends a signing ceremony for a peace agreement between Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of the Congo at the State Department, June 27, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

The officials were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of anonymity.

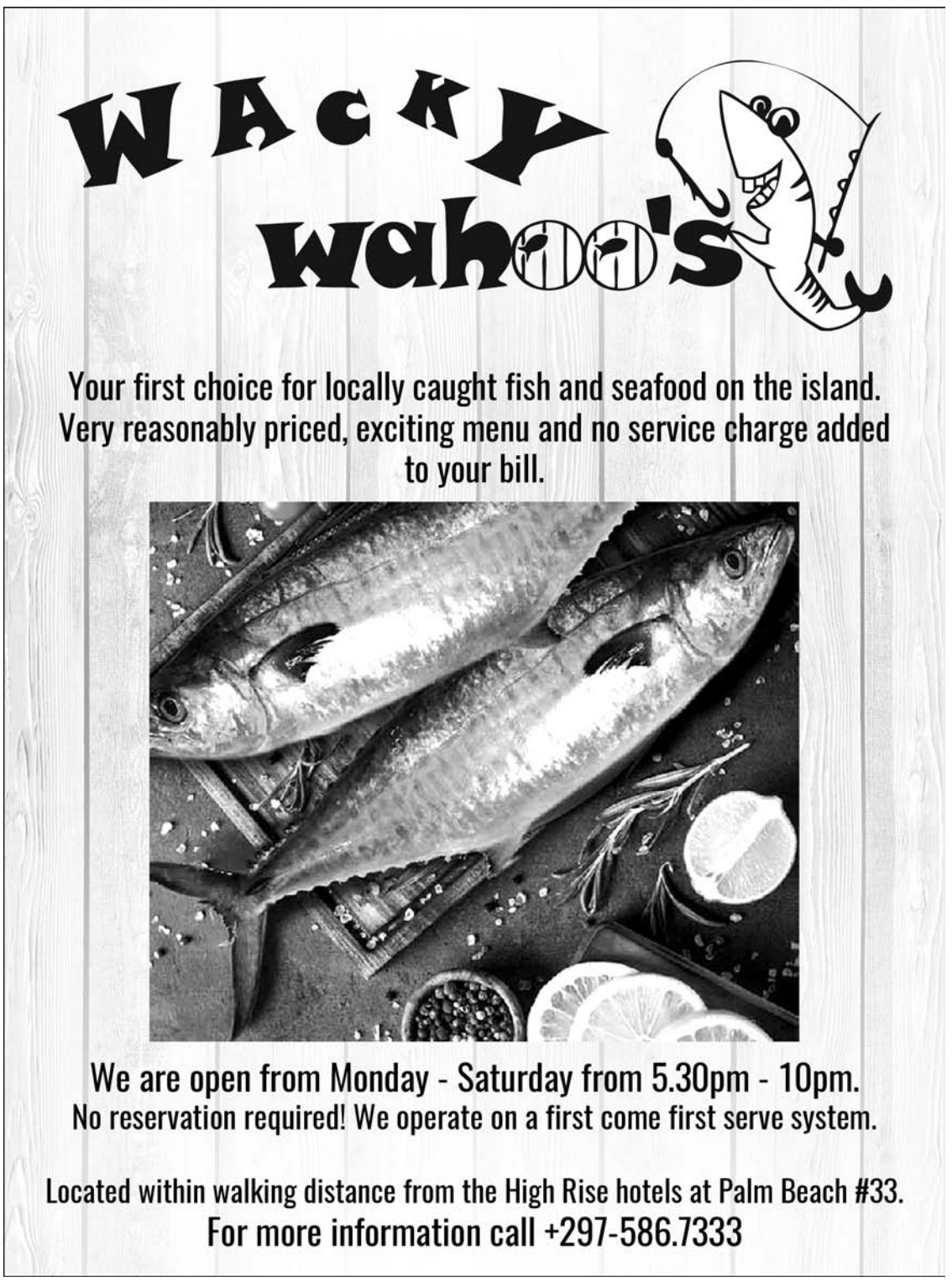
"There is no direct cyber threat to the department from this campaign, but information shared with a third party could be exposed if targeted individuals are compromised," the cable said.

The FBI has warned in a public service announcement about a "malicious" campaign relying on text messages and AI-generated voice messages that purport to come from a senior U.S. official and that aim to dupe other government officials as well as the victim's associates and contacts.

This is not the first time that Rubio has been impersonated in a deepfake. This spring, someone created a bogus video of him saying he wanted to cut off Ukraine's access to Elon Musk's Starlink internet service. Ukraine's government later rebutted the false claim.

Several potential solutions have been put forward in recent years to the growing misuse of AI for deception, including criminal penalties and improved media literacy. Concerns about deepfakes have also led to a flood of new apps and AI systems designed to spot phonies that could easily fool a human.

The tech companies working on these systems are now in competition against those who would use AI to deceive, according to Siwei Lyu, a professor and computer scientist at the University at Buffalo. He said he's seen an increase in the number of deepfakes portraying celebrities, politicians and business leaders as the technology improves.❑



U.S. adults want the government to focus on child care costs, not birth rates, AP-NORC poll finds

By TIFFANY STANLEY and LINLEY SANDERS
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — While the Trump administration explores ways to encourage Americans to have more babies and reverse the United States' falling birth rate, a new poll finds that relatively few U.S. adults see this as a priority or share the White House's concerns.

Instead, Americans are more likely to want the government to focus on the high cost of child care and improving health outcomes for pregnant women, according to the survey from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Pronatalism, or the promotion of childbearing, has gained traction as a movement within the tech world and among some religious conservatives. Prominent figures on the right like Elon Musk and Vice President JD Vance have espoused pronatalist beliefs, arguing more children are good for society.

The survey finds that only about 3 in 10 Americans say declining birth rates are a "major problem" in the U.S., and just 12% say that encouraging families to have more children should be "a high priority" for the federal government.

Republicans also see affordable child care and health outcomes for pregnant women as higher government priorities than promoting more births, indicating that even as conservatives push pronatalist policies, they're not getting much buy-in from the GOP base.

Volunteer Ydalina Luna Sosa, 62, of Providence, R.I., front left, uses a frog puppet for entertainment while supervising 10-month-old Leo Morgenweck, front right, in an early childcare program at Federal Hill House, Nov. 12, 2024, in Providence, R.I.

Associated Press

"In this day and age, it's not dire," said Misty Conklin, a supporter of President Donald Trump, of the declining birth rate.

Conklin, 50, lives in Indiana and thinks the government should prioritize making it more affordable to raise children, including supporting the social services her disabled granddaughter needs.

"It's hard to live as just a couple, let alone with children," Conklin said. "It's getting worse and worse."

Child care costs are a much bigger concern

Americans are more concerned about the cost of raising and caring for a child than the number of babies being born, the survey found.

About three-quarters of U.S. adults say the cost of child care is a "major problem." That includes about 8 in 10 Democrats and women, as well as roughly 7 in 10 Republicans and men.

Policies like free or low-cost daycare for children who are too young to attend public school and paid family leave are also popular with about two-thirds of Americans.

For Maria Appelbe, a Trump voter in Arizona, child care costs factored into her decision to quit her job to care for her daughter when she was younger.

The 49-year-old said, "I was lucky enough that back in those days without inflation, we were able to make it work."

Not many US adults are worried too few children being born

Americans seem to have few opinions about the number of children families should have. Demographic projections have indicated the country's replacement rate is 2.1 children per woman, which would keep the population from shrinking over the long term. However, in the survey, there aren't strong opinions about whether it's "mostly a good thing" or "mostly a bad thing" for families to have fewer than two children or more than two.

Appelbe, who has one teenager, thinks financially it makes sense to have small families.

"I'm so glad that I was able to give her everything that I could, but I definitely think if I had more children, I wouldn't have been able to," she said.

While few Americans say the federal government should make it a "high priority" to encourage families to have more children, a majority, 55%, do want the government to focus on improving health outcomes for women.

Black adults are especially likely to say this, as are women. Black women have the highest maternal mortality rate in the United States, which lags behind other wealthy nations in maternal health.

Pronatalism ideas register more with conservatives, but most aren't thinking about it.❑

Section of South Florida roadway could be renamed 'President Donald J. Trump Boulevard'

President Donald Trump's motorcade heads east on Southern Blvd. from Palm Beach International Airport to Mar-a-Lago, Jan. 17, 2020.

Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — A busy stretch of South Florida roadway could soon be called "President Donald J. Trump Boulevard."

The Palm Beach County Board of County Commissioners is set to vote Tuesday on a resolution that would rename a 4-mile (6.4-kilometer) stretch of Southern Boulevard that runs from Palm Beach International Airport to the president's home at the Mar-a-Lago resort.

Legislation passed by the Florida Legislature and signed into law by Gov. Ron DeSantis earlier this year directs the Florida Department of Transportation to erect a sign along the stretch of Southern Boulevard honoring Trump.

The legislation also calls for another section of the road be renamed "PBSO Motorman Highway," in honor of three motorcycle deputies with the Palm Beach Sheriff's Office who were killed in a crash last year.

The law requires local approval to take effect.

If the resolution passes, the new signs should be installed by September.

The names are ceremonial, meaning postal addresses and emergency-response systems will continue to use Southern Boulevard.❑

Kremlin calls transportation minister's death 'tragic' but gives no clues about his apparent suicide

MOSCOW (AP) — The apparent suicide of Russia's transportation minister brought expressions of shock and sorrow Tuesday from the Kremlin but no new clues as to why Roman Starovoit might have taken his own life amid media speculation that he potentially was facing corruption charges.

Starovoit, who served in his post for little over a year, was found dead from a gunshot wound -- news that broke hours after a decree was issued Monday by President Vladimir Putin that dismissed the 53-year-old Cabinet member.

Starovoit's body was found in the Odintsovo district just west of the capital that is home to many members of Russia's elite, according to the Investigative Committee, the country's top criminal investigation agency. It said that a criminal probe was launched into his death and investigators saw suicide as the most likely cause.

The agency said Starovoit's body was found in his car, but Russian media that carried images from the scene later reported that he was found dead in a small park next to a parking lot where he left his Tesla and a pistol presented to him as an official gift was at his side.

The reports said Starovoit's personal assistant was asked to identify his body and she was seen weeping afterward.

Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov refused to comment on the circumstances of Starovoit's death, saying that investigators will have to determine the details.

"Such information is always tragic and sad," Peskov said, noting that Putin was immediately informed about it. "Naturally, we were shocked by it."

Russian media reported that Starovoit's dismissal and his death could have been linked to an investigation into the embezzlement of state funds allocated for building fortifications in the Kursk region, where he was governor for five years before becoming transportation minister.

Starovoit's successor as governor, Alexei Smirnov, stepped down in December and was arrested on embezzlement charges in April. Some Russian media have claimed that Smirnov had told investigators about Starovoit's alleged involvement in the corruption scheme and his arrest appeared inevitable.

Some commentators even alleged that Starovoit's associates in higher echelons could have ordered his killing to avoid exposure.

The alleged embezzlement has been cited as one reason behind the Russian military's failure to stem a surprise August 2024 incursion in the region by Ukrainian troops that quickly overwhelmed lightly armed Russian border guards and inexperienced army conscripts. The incursion humiliated the Kremlin — the first time the country's territory was occupied by an invader since World War II.

The Russian military announced in April that its troops had fully reclaimed the border territory nearly nine months after losing chunks of the region. Ukraine had disputed that assertion.

On July 1, former Deputy Defense Minister Timur Ivanov was convicted on charges of embezzlement and money laundering and sentenced to 13 years in prison in a high-profile case that exposed rampant military corruption widely blamed for Moscow's military setbacks in Ukraine. Ivanov was the most visible figure in a far-ranging probe into alleged military graft that also targeted several other top officials who were close to former Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu. Shoigu, a veteran official who had personal ties to Putin, survived the purge of his inner circle and was given a high-profile post of secretary of Russia's Security Council.❑

Transport Minister Roman Starovoit attends a meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin at the Kremlin in Moscow, Russia, Thursday, Jan. 30, 2025.

Associated Press

A U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement officer listens during a briefing, Jan. 27, 2025, in Silver Spring, Md.

Associated Press

South Sudan says 8 men deported from the U.S. are now in its custody

JUBA, South Sudan (AP) — South Sudanese authorities confirmed on Tuesday that eight men deported from the United States were now in the custody of the government of the African country.

Apuk Ayuel, a spokesperson for the foreign ministry, told reporters that the eight arrived at Juba International Airport on Saturday following "standard deportation procedures undertaken" by the U.S. government.

The men are "under the care of the relevant authorities who are screening them and ensuring their safety and well-being," she said, without specifying where they are held.

U.S. authorities said on Friday that the eight men deported in May and held for weeks at an American military base in Djibouti arrived in South Sudan after the Supreme Court cleared the way for their transfer.

The men — from Cuba, Laos, Mexico, Myanmar, Vietnam and South Sudan are part of a case that had gone to the Supreme Court, which had permitted their removal from the U.S. Administration officials said the men had been convicted of violent crimes in the U.S.

The deportations have raised safety and other concerns among some in this country.

"South Sudan is not a dumping ground for criminals," said Edmund Yakani, a prominent civic leader in the country.

South Sudan's government has struggled since gaining independence from Sudan in 2011 to deliver many of the basic services. Years of conflict have left the country heavily reliant on aid that has been hit hard by sweeping cuts in U.S. foreign assistance.

Economic hardship has deepened in recent months because of declining oil revenues, with crude exports to Port Sudan affected by civil war in the neighboring country.❑

ICC issues arrest warrants for Taliban leaders over persecution of women and girls

By MIKE CORDER
Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — The International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants Tuesday for the Taliban's supreme leader and the head of Afghanistan's Supreme Court on charges of persecuting women and girls since seizing power nearly four years ago.The warrants also accuse the leaders of persecuting "other persons nonconforming with the Taliban's policy on gender, gender identity or expression; and on political grounds against persons perceived as 'allies of girls and women.'"

A general view of the exterior of the International Criminal Court at The Hague, Netherlands, March 12, 2025.

Associated Press

The warrants were issued against Taliban supreme leader Hibatullah Akhunzada and the head of the Supreme Court, Abdul Hakim Haqqani.

The court's prosecution office called the decision to issue warrants "an important vindication and acknowledgment of the rights of Afghan women and girls." It added that the judges' ruling "also recognizes the rights and lived experiences of persons whom the Taliban perceived as not conforming with their ideological expectations of gender identity or expression, such as members of the LGBTQI+ community, and persons whom the Taliban perceived as allies of girls and women."

Zabihullah Mujahid, the chief spokesman for the Taliban government, rejected the court's authority.

He said in a statement that the court's decision reflected "open hostility and hatred toward the holy religion of Islam and Shariah law," and is "an insult to the beliefs of all Muslims."

The warrants came just hours after the United Nations adopted a resolution Monday over U.S. objections that called on the Taliban to reverse their worsening oppression of women and girls and eliminate all terrorist organizations.

They are the latest high-profile suspects named in arrest warrants issued by The Hague-based court that also has sought the arrest of other leaders including Russian President Vladimir Putin and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Since returning to power in Afghanistan in 2021, the Taliban have imposed harsh measures, banning women from public places and girls from attending school beyond the sixth grade. Last week, Russia became the first country to formally recognize the Taliban's government.

The court said in a statement that the Taliban have "severely deprived, through decrees and edicts, girls and women of the rights to education, privacy and family life and the freedoms of movement, expression, thought, conscience and religion."

The court's chief prosecutor, Karim Khan, sought the warrants in January, saying that they recognized that "Afghan women and girls as well as the LGBTQI+ community are facing an unprecedented, unconscionable and ongoing persecution by the Taliban."❑

At least 13 may have killed themselves over U.K.'s Post Office wrongful convictions scandal

By SYLVIA HUI
Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — At least 13 people were thought to have taken their own lives as a result of Britain's Post Office scandal, in which almost 1,000 postal employees were wrongly prosecuted or convicted of criminal wrongdoing because of a faulty computer system, a report said Tuesday.

Another 59 people contemplated suicide over the scandal, one of the biggest miscarriages of justice in U.K. history.

A logo of a post office is displayed in London, Wednesday, Jan. 10, 2024.

Associated Press

From around 1999 to 2015, hundreds of people who worked at Post Office branches were wrongly convicted of theft, fraud and false accounting based on evidence from a defective information technology system. Some went to prison or were forced into bankruptcy. Others lost their homes, suffered health problems or breakdowns in their relationships or became ostracized by their communities.

Retired judge Wyn Williams, who chairs a public inquiry into the scandal, said in a report published Tuesday that 13 people killed themselves as a consequence of a faulty Post Office accounting system "showing an illusory shortfall in branch accounts," according to their families.

The problems at the Post Office, which is state-owned but operates as a private business, were known for years. But the full scale of the injustice didn't become widely known until last year, when a TV docudrama propelled the scandal to national headlines and galvanized support for victims.

The culprit was a piece of software called Horizon, made by the Japanese firm Fujitsu, which the Post Office introduced 25 years ago across branches to automate sales accounting. When the software showed false account shortfalls, the Post Office accused branch managers of dishonesty and obliged them to repay the money.

In all, the report said that about 1,000 people were prosecuted and convicted based on evidence from the incorrect data. The government has since introduced legislation to reverse the convictions and compensate the victims.

Williams said that some senior Post Office employees knew or should have known that the Horizon system was faulty. But "the Post Office maintained the fiction that its data was always accurate," he said.

Jo Hamilton, a former Post Office manager and a lead campaigner, said that the report "shows the full scale of the horror that they unleashed on us."❑

Aruba: The island of Aloes

ORANJESTAD – Aloe vera, a succulent plant species, is renowned for its incredible properties for the skin. It is widely distributed and usually grows in tropical, semi-tropical and arid climates on the planet. But this plant also had a very prominent role in the history of Aruba, and its significance to the island's economy endures to this day.

The leaves of Aloe vera contain a good amount of gel which when used topically, is great for the skin. Traditionally, Arubans use this gel to treat minor burns and other skin ailments, or just to keep skin supple and looking bright and nourished. Aside from the gel, aloe contains a bitter, yellow substance (called aloin) which is a gentle but powerful laxative, and it is also the origin of the industry of aloe in Aruba.

According to the website of Royal Aruba Aloe,

Aloe vera was introduced in Aruba around 1840, when most of the island's inhabitants were farmers of little means. Dutch Governor Van Raders introduced the plant after it had been introduced in other islands of the Caribbean to cultivate and harvest the aloe to produce the laxative.

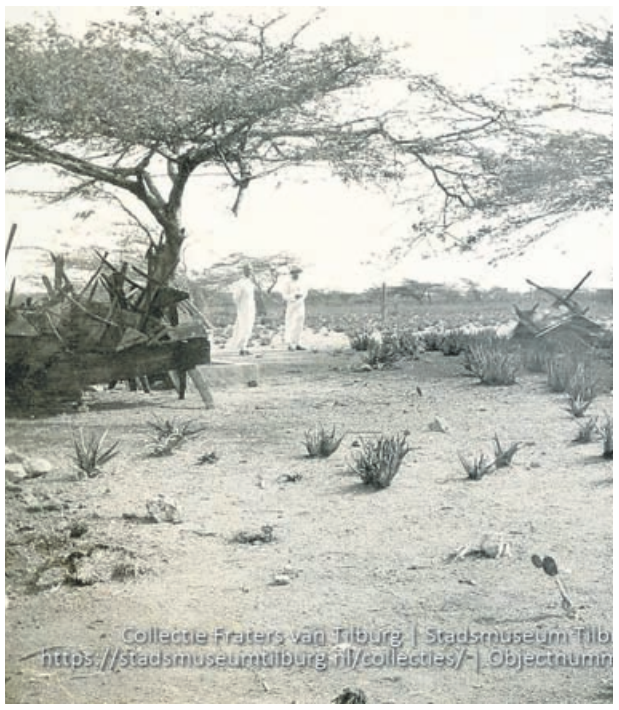
Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes."

Under Commander Jan Helenus Ferguson (1866-1871), aloe experienced a boom, which is why there is a road named after him, which goes through the aloe fields. In the 19th century, Aruba was the main supplier of aloin for laxative, which was imported abroad to the United States and Europe. The aloin from Aruba and Curaçao was known to be one of the best in the world and was more expensive, which meant that at the time, it had significant economic impact, particularly for the local farmers.

However, by the time the oil industry arrived on Aruba, it changed the labor market on Aruba, shifting away from agriculture. It would be after World War II that aloe would make a comeback. And eventually, as science learned about the amazing properties of aloe gel, the industry shifted from producing laxative to producing skin care. An interesting fact is that in 1951, the production of Aruban aloe amounted to around 30 percent of the total global production!

The impact and relevance of aloe is visible all around Aruba. While most homes will have a few plants for personal use and decoration, houses are also decorated with aloe motifs, and at some point, aloe even featured on post stamps. Around 1920, about two-thirds of Aruba was aloe fields, earning our island the nickname "The Island of Aloes." And in 1955, the aloe became a part of Aruba's coat of arms, symbolizing prosperity for the island.❑

Images from the archive of the National Library of Aruba.



Two green stars align to make Caribbean culinary history

Bucuti & Tara will welcome the Caribbean's first restaurant led by a chef honored with both a Michelin star for culinary excellence and a Green Michelin star for sustainability

EAGLE BEACH—Epicurean excellence meets environmental elegance this summer as Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort, Aruba's premier adults-only oasis, prepares for the opening of Terra by Jeremy Ford. This boundary-breaking restaurant will be helmed by Chef Jeremy Ford, whose Miami-based Stubborn Seed holds a prestigious Michelin Star and was recently further distinguished with a coveted Michelin Green Star for sustainability. This latest achievement means Ford is bringing this pedigree of one of the rarest and most respected culinary combinations in the world to Aruba, making it a first for the island and the region.

The Rarest of Stars for Sustainability in Fine Dining

Ford, the winner of Bravo television's Top Chef Season 13, is the mastermind chef behind a shared portfolio of culinary hot spots including Miami, Las Vegas, and the Florida Keys. The James Beard Foundation nominee's Miami-based Michelin Star restaurant joins a new elite level with the recently earned Michelin Green Star, an honor bestowed only for the finest in culinary sustainability.

wFew chefs or establishments in the world can claim both. Ford's meticulous approach to sustainability—from responsible sourcing to waste reduction, energy-efficient operations, and community collaboration—will further shape the fine dining experience of Terra by Jeremy Ford. Guests will delight in unique flavors backed by the most stringent sustainability standards that care for them as much as they do the planet.

A Destination Dining Experience Rooted in Responsibility

Terra by Jeremy Ford will be a culinary destination for resort guests and locals alike, offering an experience that transcends traditional fine dining by placing equal importance on flavor, origin, and sustainability. The menu will celebrate the bounty of Aruba and the region through seasonally evolving dishes, regenerative cooking techniques, and ingredients sourced both locally and from Ford's Farm, the chef's 5.5-acre organic farm in Homestead, Florida. This hands-on venture allows Chef Ford to cultivate vibrant vegetables and aromatic herbs with care, ensuring every plate is a direct connection between the land and the plate.

What makes Terra truly unique is that it is being built with the island, for the island. This is not an imported concept, but a one-of-a-kind culinary vision created with local chefs, farmers, fishermen, and artisans. Chef Ford is developing Terra in partnership with third-generation Aruban hospitality pioneers Maurice and Karim Neme, whose family legacy has helped shape Aruba's tourism identity for decades. Their deep ties to the community ensure that Terra will be a heartfelt tribute to Aruba's culture, ingredients, and environment.

Guests can expect an unparalleled dining experience where elevated culinary techniques, sustainable sourcing and the island's natural beauty come together in harmony. Terra by Jeremy Ford promises to be a landmark for destination dining in the Caribbean, born from a shared legacy of excellence and sustainability, and brought to life at the iconic Bucuti & Tara, the resort that redefined eco-luxury for the world.❑

Fun facts about cacti hedges "Trankera"

(Oranjestad) - When off-roading in inland Aruba, you may notice some cacti hedges around various properties or lined up by certain pathways. These man-made hedges are called "trankera" and play an important role in maintaining our flora and fauna.

The trankera dates to colonialism, where settlers established several 'cunucu' (farm) on the island. People either used stone walls or trankera as a fence to ward off strangers and wild animals that can feed on the cunucu vegetation or cattle.

Nowadays, trankeras are less common, and those that still stand are often not maintained. On the surface this seems like a bad development, however this proved to be beneficial for our flora and fauna. Naturally developed flora around the hedges offers more shelter for fauna. Another aspect is the propagation process. When pruning hedges, flowers and seeds were removed, which limits propagation to a minimum.

So, though trankeras don't play that big of a role in Aruba's agriculture anymore, our environment still reaps the benefits of these long-standing natural structures.❑

Soaring through the blue skies

Birds of Aruba

(Oranjestad)—Aruba's nature is very diverse and is home to several beautiful and majestic wildlife. Among these is the bright Trupial, whose angelic voice is always heard with the rising sun; the cuddly parakeet, always in company of another, and the majestic Warawara, a mighty bird that can be seen soaring in the clear blue skies.

Trupial

Icterus icterus, or known locally as the Venezuelan or Orange Troupial, is a striking songbird whose bright orange feathers can be spotted from a far distance. Known to be the first bird to sing at the first sign of sunrise, this beloved songbird likes to wake up with a tune. But don't let their angelic songs fools you; the Trupial can be a bit aggressive towards any threat, protective over their nesting spots—nesting spots they most likely stole from other birds. Trupials can be seen regularly, often in trees or on top of a cactus.

Photo Credit: Daniel Ruben Gonzalez

Prikichi (parakeet)

The Brown-throated Prikichi (Aratinga pertinax) became the national bird of Aruba back in 2015, at the request of Aruba Birdlife Conservation. The bright green, adorable parakeet usually flies in

flock of 30 or more, but its population has been declining since the 2010s. Prikichis are a shier breed than the trupial, often flying away at the sign of any threat. They use termite nests for breeding spots and feed mostly on seeds from the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi tree and fruits.

Photo Credit: Daniel Ruben Gonzalez

Warawara

The Warawara or Caracara is one of the biggest birds found in the Aruban mondi. At a heigh of 41 to 60 cm, their wingspan can measure up to 125 cm. Known as the "garbage man", this bird of prey mostly feeds on dead animals. Its coat is dark brown, with a cream-colored neck, orange face, thick beak and long legs. The Warawara prefers to build its nest in the middle of tall cacti and produces a rattling, screaming sound, throwing its head back onto its back while calling.

While these birds are a beautiful sight to behold, it is very important to keep your distance and respect their habitats. This is how we protect our wildlife. By admiring the beauty of Aruba in a safe and respectful manner, we can do our part in protecting our sacred nature. ❑

Photo Credit: Aruba Birdlife Conservation

Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for theiryears of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors

Mr. Sven Buelow & Mrs. Cristina Buelow from Libertyville Illinois, United States.
Ms. Shelby Buelow from Libertyville Illinois, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Renaissance Wind Creek Aruba Resort bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

- Aruba's people.
- Aruba's weather.
- Aruba's restaurants.
- Aruba is a enjoyable escape.
- "Love the wildlife"
- Grew up coming every year since I was a baby"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island".❑

ARUBA TODAY

ISLAND INSIGHT

Article by Etnia Nativa
WhatsApp us 592 2702 and book your Aruban experience!
Etnia Nativa is close to high rise Hotels

"When Giants Roamed Aruba"

Episode CCCXI -311

The narrative of Etnia Nativa—meaning 'Native Ethnicity'—highlights the importance of reclaiming Aruba's cultural identity, often overshadowed by its colonial history and the demands of tourism. Through this platform, Etnia Nativa shares an authentic native perspective, educates the public, preserves the island's heritage, and inspires an 'island keeper' mindset.

In this episode, we uncover the untold story of prehistoric Aruba. Twelve thousand years ago, the southwestern Caribbean—where Aruba is located today—was a vastly different place. The global climate was cooler, with average temperatures six to twelve degrees lower than today. Conditions were drier at first but gradually shifted to become more humid than they are now.

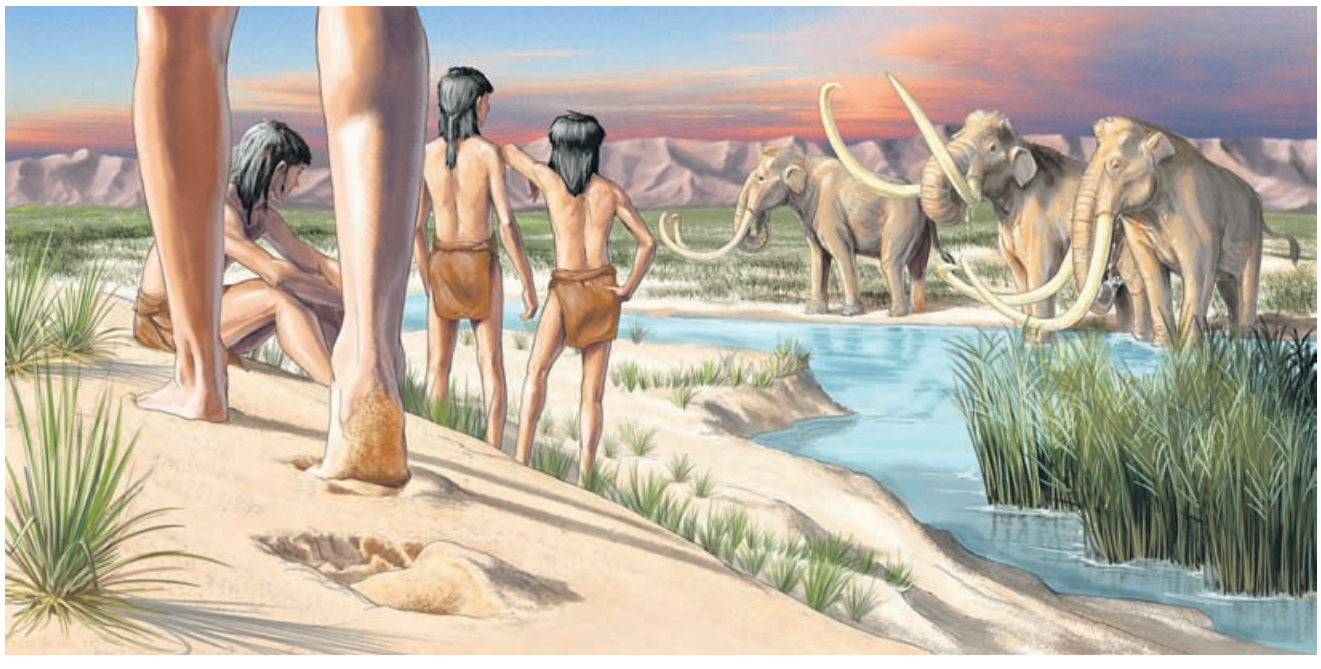
At the time, Aruba's landscape was lush and vibrant, teeming with flora that has long since vanished. Forests once blanketed much of the island, filled with ferns, orchids, bromeliads, vines, and other plant species—many now extinct. These plants may have offered untold medicinal properties, food sources, pigments, or natural repellents, all lost to history.
Early humans—most likely arriving from the South American mainland—encountered a land rich in natural resources. Skilled and adaptable, they carried their lives on their backs. They used tools and plant knowledge with expertise, read subtle changes in the weather, and developed sharp senses—such as smell—to track animals, detect approaching rain, or find ripe fruit

Though life in this environment was challenging, these ancient peoples thrived. The island's varied topography offered unique zones—dense rainforests with year-round canopy cover, open savannas filled with cactus and xerophytic vegetation, wetlands, and natural salt pans. The southern coast was lined with thick mangrove forests, their roots submerged directly in the sea. These forests were so dense that only a few access points allowed entry—small clearings that eventually became bays. Some of these, like Commandeursbaai at Savaneta, Spanish Lagoon, Barcadera, and Paardenbaai in Oranjestad, are still in use today.
One such bay, now lost to time, was Taratata in Oranjestad. It may have been the original landing site of the first Paleo hunters and was likely named in their ancient language. Interestingly, "Taratata" may be related to "Tarataara" in Venezuela, which meant "place of departure"—suggesting a migration link between the two places. Sadly, the bay was consumed during the expansion of Paardenbaai's container port, and its name has nearly faded from memory.

Back then, the wider region teemed with now-extinct megafauna. Animals such as camels, giant armadillos, short-faced bears, mastodons, tapirs, saber-toothed tigers, mammoths, dire wolves, and even native horses roamed the continent. These species, now found only in fossils and museum records, were pursued by the first Paleo hunters as they migrated from Asia into North America.

One possible migration route into the Caribbean was through the Florida Panhandle, island-hopping southward, or from the Yucatán Peninsula to Cuba and beyond. However, the most likely access point to Aruba would have been directly from South America, following the northern coast.

These early people understood nature intimately. To them, the Earth was their mother, and the forces of nature—the wind, water, and fire—were guided by a divine presence. Lightning in the sky and thunder were not just weather phenomena but the voice of a god who came from beyond the clouds.
If you enjoyed learning about our ancestral stories and want to explore the true identity of the Aruban people, we invite you to visit Etnia Nativa—the only "living museum" of its kind in the Caribbean, reflecting the island's rich mestization (cultural blending). Founded in 1994, Etnia Nativa has been a pioneer, co-founding key institutions such as Aruba's National Park, the Archaeological Museum, several artisan foundations, and other voluntary initiatives.❑



Etnia Nativa isn't just a place—it's a gateway. Quietly tucked away near the high-rise hotels, this private residence also serves as a cultural sanctuary that most tourists never discover. But that's the magic. It's intentionally exclusive, welcoming only those with a genuine curiosity and a thirst for authentic discovery.
Connect through a one-of-a-kind experience with the spirit and soul of Aruba's ancient heritage. Whats App +297 592 2702 etnianativa03@gmail.com

Fruit Loose & Veggie Boost: Aruban fruits and vegetables

Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mangoes hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.

Mispel

This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year- round.

Kenepa

Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

Druif

There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

Shimarucu

Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

Tamarind

A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

When it comes to veggies the island certainly offers a home-grown selection. They taste delicious and have their specific talents to boost your immune system. Start the day with a 'batida' (smoothie) enriched with a local veggie touch or select your restaurant that offers local vegetable dishes to get the real pure taste of it.

Comcomber chiquito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Comcomber chiquito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year- round.

Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year-round.

Bonch'i Cunucu

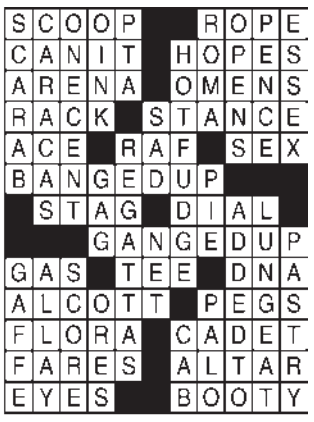
A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture–more so than snap beans–and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

Pampuna

In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruban restaurants is Sopa Di Pompuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups.❑

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

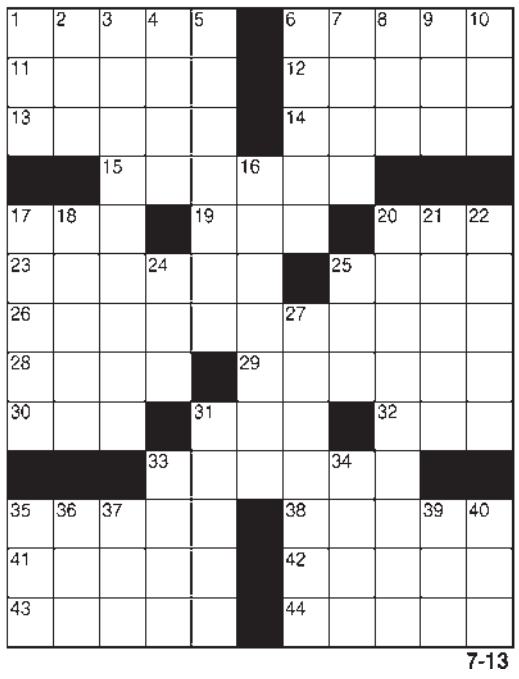


ACROSS

1 Pool fill
6 Asimov forte
11 Mindful
12 Donut-shaped
13 Freezing
14 Speak
15 "The Apartment" star
17 Before today
19 Snaky swimmer
20 Spree
23 Home to Duke
25 Band sample
26 Custom
28 Singer Burl
29 Forking over
30 Pitch's kin
31 Hotel feature
32 Pindar work
33 Soap opera
35 Poisonous
38 Gold-loving king
41 Bold way to solve crosswords
42 Game setting
43 Clamorous
44 Hardly cool

DOWN

1 Funny fellow
2 Really impress
3 Tough challenge
4 Buffalo's lake
5 Carnivore's craving
6 Bar seat
7 Hokey stuff
8 Lyricist Gershwin
9 In shape
10 Bar rocks
16 Jotting spot
17 Let on
18 Tropical fruit
20 Force studiers
21 Improve, in a way
22 Canyon
24 "— a Rebel"
25 Parched
27 Crew member
31 Baseball's Dent
33 Confession list
34 Cork's country
35 Light metal
36 Lennon's love
37 Clock numeral
39 Plus
40 Utter



7-13

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

7-13 CRYPTOQUOTE

DIMSC MV SIQMEL SCU DMZVS VSUX UTUE PCUE BFK NFE'S VUU SCU PCFOU VSIMZGIVU.

— RIZSME OKSCUZ QMEL, HZ.

Cryptoquote: OUR PHONES HAVE CREATED WHAT I LIKE TO CALL SADD — SOCIAL ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER. — DAN LEVY

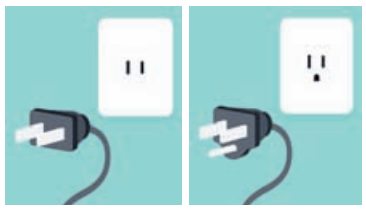
Cruise ship Schedule: July 02 - 16 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
WED	02	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	06	*FREEWINDS - Dept.*	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	08	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
WED	09	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	13	*FREEWINDS - Dept.*	****	22.30	E	-
TUE	15	ADVENTURE OF THE SEAS	07.00	16.00	C	1
WED	16	OASIS OF THE SEAS	11.00	23.00	I	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	08.00	16.00	C	1
		RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	B	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power



Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku

			8	1	4			
3						1		8
	4			3			7	
		7					3	
4	6	3	7		8			1
	8	2				4		
	3	6	9	7	1			
7	9	8						5
	1		5	8	3	7	9	6

Difficulty: ★★★ 7/9

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Answer to previous puzzle

9	7	2	8	1	3	5	4	6
4	3	5	6	2	7	8	1	9
8	1	6	5	4	9	7	2	3
7	6	3	2	8	5	1	9	4
2	5	4	3	9	1	6	7	8
1	8	9	4	7	6	3	5	2
6	2	1	7	3	4	9	8	5
5	4	7	9	6	8	2	3	1
3	9	8	1	5	2	4	6	7

Difficulty: ★★ 7/8

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Get ready to pass through U.S. airport security checkpoints with your shoes on

By MICHELLE CHAPMAN
AP Business Writer

For the first time in almost 20 years, travelers may no longer be required to take off their shoes during security screenings at U.S. airports.

The Transportation Security Administration is looking to abandon the additional security step that has for years bedeviled anyone passing through U.S airports, according to media reports.

If implemented, it would put an end to a security screening mandate put in place almost 20 years ago, several years after "shoe bomber" Richard Reid's failed attempt to take down a flight from Paris to Miami in late 2001.

The travel newsletter Gate Access was first to report that the security screening change is coming. ABC News reported on an internal memo sent to TSA officers last week that states the new policy allows travelers to keep their shoes on during standard screenings at many U.S. airports, beginning Sunday. That would expand to all airports shortly.

The plan is for the change to occur at all U.S. airports soon, the memo said.

Travelers have previously been able to skirt the extra security requirement if they participate in the TSA PreCheck program, which costs around $80 for five years.❑

ARUBA TODAY

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3 Bed Ocean View: $30,000

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1 Bed Ocean View: $17,500

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

Amazon extends Prime Day discounts to 4 days as retailers weigh tariff-related price increases

By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO
AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon is extending its annual Prime Day sales and offering new membership perks to Gen Z shoppers amid tariff-related price worries and possibly some consumer boredom with an event marking its 11th year.

The e-commerce giant's promised blitz of summer deals for Prime members starts at 3:01 a.m. Eastern time on Tuesday. For the first time, Seattle-based Amazon is holding the now-misnamed Prime Day over four days; the company launched the event in 2015 and expanded it to two days in 2019.

Before wrapping up Prime Day 2025 early Friday, Amazon said it would have deals dropping as often as every 5 minutes during certain periods. Prime members ages 18-24, who pay $7.49 per month instead of the $14.99 that older customers not eligible for discounted rates pay for free shipping and other benefits, will receive 5% cash back on their purchases for a limited time.

Amazon executives declined to comment on the potential impact of tariffs on Prime Day deals. The event is taking place two and a half months after an online news report sparked speculation that Amazon planned to display added tariff costs next to product prices on its website.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt denounced the purported change as a "hostile and political act" before Amazon clarified the idea had been floated for its low-cost Haul storefront but never approved.

Amazon's past success with using Prime Day to drive sales and attract new members spurred other major retail chains to schedule competing sales in July. Best Buy, Target and Walmart are repeating the practice this year.

Like Amazon, Walmart is adding two more days to its promotional period, which starts Tuesday and runs through July 13. The nation's largest retailer is making its summer deals available in stores as well as online for the first time.

An Amazon Prime delivery person lifts packages while making a stop at a high-rise apartment building, Nov. 28, 2023, in Denver.

Associated Press

Here's what to expect:

More days might not mean more spending

Amazon expanded Prime Day this year because shoppers "wanted more time to shop and save," Amazon Prime Vice President Jamil Ghani recently told The Associated Press.

Analysts are unsure the extra days will translate into more purchases given that renewed inflation worries and potential price increases from tariffs may make consumers less willing to spend. Amazon doesn't disclose Prime Day sales figures but said last year that the event achieved record global sales.

Adobe Digital Insights predicts that the sales event will drive $23.8 billion in overall online spending from July 8 to July 11, 28.4% more than the similar period last year. In 2024 and 2023, online sales increased 11% and 6.1% during the comparable four days of July.

Vivek Pandya, lead analyst at Adobe Digital Insights, noted that Amazon's move to stretch the sales event to four days is a big opportunity to "really amplify and accelerate the spending velocity."

Caila Schwartz, director of consumer insights and strategy at software company Salesforce, noted that July sales in general have lost some momentum in recent years. Amazon is not a Salesforce Commerce Cloud customer, so the business software company doesn't have access to the online giant's e-commerce sales and so is not privy to Prime Day figures.

"What we saw last year was that (shoppers) bought and then they were done, " Schwartz said. "We know that the consumer is still really cautious. So it's likely we could see a similar pattern where they come out early, they're ready to buy and then they take a step back."

Tariffs don't seem to be impacting costs much (so far)

Amazon executives reported in May that the company and many of its third-party sellers tried to beat big import tax bills by stocking up on foreign goods before President Donald Trump's tariffs took effect. And because of that move, a fair number of third-party sellers hadn't changed their pricing at that time, Amazon said.

Adobe Digital Insights' Pandya expects discounts to remain on par with last year and for other U.S. retail companies to mark 10% to 24% off the manufacturers' suggested retail price between Tuesday and Friday.

Salesforce's Schwartz said she's noticed retailers becoming more precise with their discounts, such as offering promotion codes that apply to selected products instead of their entire websites.

Shoppers might focus on necessities

Amazon Prime and other July sales have historically helped jump-start back-to-school spending and encouraged advance planners to buy other seasonal merchandise earlier. Analysts said they expected U.S. consumers to make purchases this week out of fear that tariffs will make items more expensive later.

Brett Rose, CEO of United National Consumer Supplies, a wholesale distributor of overstocked goods like toys and beauty products, thinks shoppers will go for items like beauty essentials.

"They're going to buy more everyday items," he said.

A look at the discounts

As in past years, Amazon offered early deals leading up to Prime Day. For the big event, Amazon said it would have special discounts on Alexa-enabled products like Echo, Fire TV and Fire tablets.

Walmart said its July sale would include a 32-inch Samsung smart monitor priced at $199 instead of $299.99; and $50 off a 50-Inch Vizio Smart TV with a standard retail price of $298.00. Target said it was maintaining its 2024 prices on key back-to-school items, including a $5 backpack and a selection of 20 school supplies totaling less than $20.

Some third-party sellers will sit out Prime Day

Independent businesses that sell goods through Amazon account for more than 60% of the company's retail sales. Some third-party sellers are expected to sit out Prime Day and not offer discounts to preserve their profit margins during the ongoing tariff uncertainty, analysts said.

Rose, of United National Consumer Supplies, said he spoke with third-party sellers who said they would rather take a sales hit this week than use up a lot of their pre-tariffs inventory now and risk seeing their profit margins suffer later.

However, some independent businesses that market their products on Amazon are looking to Prime Day to make a dent in the inventory they built up earlier in the year to avoid tariffs.

Home fragrance company Outdoor Fellow, which makes about 30% of its sales through Amazon's marketplace, gets most of its candle lids, labels, jars, reed diffusers and other items from China, founder Patrick Jones said. Fearing high costs from tariffs, Jones stocked up at the beginning of the year, roughly doubling his inventory.

For Prime Day, he plans to offer bigger discounts, such as 32% off the price of a candle normally priced at $34, Jones said.❑

Pogačar claims 100th career win, beating Van der Poel in sprint on stage 4 of Tour de France

By JEROME PUGMIRE
AP Sports Writer

Defending champion Tadej Pogačar secured the 100th professional victory of his stellar career in typically flamboyant style, beating Mathieu Van der Poel in a dash to the line to win the hilly fourth stage of the Tour de France on Tuesday.

Van der Poel was the better sprinter of the two at the end of Sunday's second stage and looked set to clinch a second win in this year's race when he attacked about 200 meters from out and led.

But the defending Tour champion somehow found another gear to surge past him at the line, then pumped his fists in celebration. The 26-year-old Slovenian star wore a cap with 100 written on it when he spoke after the stage. His long list of wins includes 18 stage wins at the Tour de France, the world road race, a multitude of one-day classics and other stage wins at races like the Giro d'Italia, the Paris-Nice and Critérium du Dauphiné.

Slovenia's Tadej Pogacar right, and Netherlands' Mathieu van der Poel wearing the overall leader's yellow jersey sprint to the finish line during the fourth stage of the Tour de France cycling race over 172.2 kilometers (107 miles) with start in Amiens and finish in Rouen, France, Tuesday, July 8, 2025.
Associated Press

"It was an amazing finale, a classic stage, the end was even more explosive than we thought," he said. "I'm very happy to have won the 100th victory (overall) of my career, here on the Tour de France wearing the world champion's jersey."

Pogačar and Van der Poel have exactly the same overall time of 16 hours, 46 minutes after four stages, and count one stage win each, but Van der Poel kept the yellow jersey because of better finishing positions in the other two stages. "I would liked to have won but Tadej was the strongest today. I am glad to keep the yellow jersey, but tomorrow will be hard," Van der Poel said. "I tried to launch my sprint but I just didn't have the legs."

The 174-kilometer stage suited allrounders, starting from Amiens and ending with five consecutive small climbs to the Normandy city of Rouen.

The first of the climbs Côte Jacques Anquetil bore the name of a five-time Tour champion. The Frenchman dominated cycling in the 1960s, when he also won the Giro d'Italia twice and the Spanish Vuelta.

The peloton's pace picked up strongly heading into the last two climbs, with speeds reaching 60 kph (37 mph).❑

Kershaw appreciates his latest All-Star Game selection while understanding its unusual circumstances

Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Clayton Kershaw (22) tips his cap to the crowd after recording his 3,000th career strikeout against Chicago White Sox's Vinny Capra during the sixth inning of a baseball game Wednesday, July 2, 2025, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

By STEVE MEGARGEE
AP Sports Writer

MILWAUKEE (AP) — Los Angeles Dodgers pitcher Clayton Kershaw appreciates his 11th career All-Star Game selection while acknowledging this one's a little different from the rest.

The three-time Cy Young Award winner has made only nine starts this season but still got selected to the National League team as a Legend Pick by MLB Commissioner Rob Manfred, under a provision in the collective bargaining agreement.

"You never take for granted getting to go to an All-Star Game, regardless of the circumstances," Kershaw said Monday before the Dodgers played the Milwaukee Brewers. "Obviously, I don't deserve to get to go this season. I haven't pitched very much."

This marked the first time Manfred made a Legend Pick for the All-Star Game since 2022, when Miguel Cabrera and Albert Pujols both received that designation.

"I didn't really actually know that was a thing," Kershaw said. "At the end of the day, it's weird, but it's cool, so I'm just going to enjoy it."

The honor comes less than a week after Kershaw recorded his 3,000th career strikeout, becoming just the 20th pitcher to reach that plateau. He's in his 18th season with the Dodgers, tying Hall of Fame outfielder Zack Wheat and shortstop Bill Russell for the franchise record.

The 37-year-old left-hander didn't make his season debut until May 17 as he worked his way back from toe and knee surgeries. He also had undergone shoulder surgery after the 2023 season.❑

Sabalenka gets past Siegemund and faces Anisimova in the Wimbledon semifinals. Fritz vs. Alcaraz

By HOWARD FENDRICH
AP Tennis Writer

LONDON (AP) — Aryna Sabalenka was having a hard time dealing with her Wimbledon quarterfinal opponent's unusual game style.

The mistakes were mounting Tuesday. The stress was rising. The deficit was troubling.

As things went awry, Sabalenka would look at her box with a quizzical expression and raise her hands. After missing one forehand off a short ball, she knelt on the grass near the net, the very picture of exasperation. A month after her loss to Coco Gauff in the French Open final, Sabalenka knew she needed to keep her emotions in check and straighten out her strokes.

Aryana Sabalenka of Belarus reacts after losing a point against Laura Siegemund of Germany during a quarterfinal women's singles match at the Wimbledon Tennis Championships in London, Tuesday, July 8, 2025.

Associated Press

Did just that, right on time. Sabalenka trailed by a set, then twice was down a break in the third, before grabbing the last three games to return to the semifinals at the All England Club by overcoming 104th-ranked Laura Siegemund 4-6, 6-2, 6-4 at Centre Court.

"She pushed me so much," said Sabalenka, No. 1 since last October. "After the first set, I was just looking at my box, thinking, 'Guys, I mean, book the tickets. I think we're about to leave this beautiful city, country, place.'"

Wimbledon is the only Grand Slam tournament where Sabalenka never has been to a title match. She can change that this week if she beats No. 13 Amanda Anisimova of the United States on Thursday. Anisimova reached her first major semifinal since the 2019 French Open, when she was just 17, by getting past Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova 6-1, 7-6 (9).

The first men's semifinal was established Tuesday, too: No. 2 Carlos Alcaraz, the two-time defending champion, against No. 5 Taylor Fritz.

Sabalenka won the Australian Open twice and the U.S. Open once, and was the runner-up at this year's Australian Open (losing to Madison Keys) and French Open (losing to Gauff).

The 27-year-old Belarusian lost in the semifinals at Wimbledon in 2021 and 2023.

Sabalenka hadn't dropped a set during this year's trip to the grass-court major until Tuesday but she also hadn't faced an opponent quite like the 37-year-old Siegemund.

The German, who eliminated No. 6 Keys last week, was the oldest and by far the lowest-ranked of any woman in the quarterfinals, as well as the one with the fewest career titles (two).

She arrived at Wimbledon with a career record there of 2-5 and with a 4-9 mark on tour in 2025.

But her ability to change the depth, speed, angles and spins of her shots over and over can frustrate any opponent and dull the type of power that Sabalenka brings. And, make no mistake: Sabalenka was frustrated, especially in the final set.

"It's not like it's an annoying game. It's a smart game. She's really making everyone work against her," Sabalenka said. "You know you have to work for every point. It doesn't matter if you're a big server, if you're a big hitter. You have to work. You have to run. And you have to earn the win."

Trailing 4-3 in the last set, Sabalenka broke to open her match-ending run. In the next game, she delivered her lone two aces, at 103 mph and 116 mph.

When Sabalenka produced a volley winner to break again and end things after nearly three hours, she shut her eyes, spread her arms wide and let out a big scream.

What else happened in the Wimbledon quarterfinals on Tuesday?

Alcaraz was a 6-2, 6-3, 6-3 winner against unseeded Cam Norrie, the last British player in either singles bracket, and 2024 U.S. Open runner-up Fritz recovered from a mid-match lull to reach the semifinals at the All England Club for the first time with a 6-3, 6-4, 1-6, 7-6 (4) victory over Karen Khachanov.

Who will play in Wednesday's quarterfinals at the All England Club?

The last two women's quarterfinals are No. 7 Mirra Andreeva vs. Belinda Bencic, and No. 8 Iga Swiatek vs. No. 19 Liudmila Samsonova.

The men's matchups are No. 1 Jannik Sinner vs. No. 10 Ben Shelton, and 24-time major champion Novak Djokovic vs. No. 22 Flavio Cobolli.❑